



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# PROGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

## I.—THE NEW ENGLAND STATES.

BY MICHAEL G. MULHALL, F. S. S.

---

THE progress of the United States in the last fifty years so far surpasses that of any other nation in ancient or modern times, whether viewed in regard to population, or to industry and wealth, that the subject is one of extraordinary interest, not only to Americans, but to European spectators. In order more closely to study the subject we may consider the Union as composed of five great communities,\* viz., New England, the Middle, the Southern, the Prairie, and the Pacific States. All have advanced, although not equally nor in the same direction, and all give promise of steady development in the future.

Beginning with the New England States, we have to consider the smallest of the communities in question, since the collective area of the six States hardly exceeds that of Florida. It is, however, in some respects the most interesting; its historical associations include Plymouth Rock and Bunker's Hill; its academic and literary glories shed a light over the whole Union, and its cities and towns have been the cradle of manufacturing industry in the New World.

*Population*—The population of New England has not quite doubled in the last half century, while that of the Union has more than trebled; but this is not surprising, since the room for expansion is less, the density of population being 75 persons to

\* New England comprises Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts. The Middle States are New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The Southern include the two Virginias, the two Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The Prairie States include Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, and two Dakotas; and the Pacific States, California, Oregon, Nevada, Colorado, Washington, Montana, Utah, New Mexico, Idaho, Arizona, and Wyoming.

the square mile, while it is only 23 for the whole Union. Progress since 1850 is shown thus :

	1850.	1890.	1897 (Est.).
Maine.....	585,000	661,000	670,000
New Hampshire.....	320,000	376,000	405,000
Vermont.....	315,000	332,000	335,000
Rhode Island.....	150,000	346,000	410,000
Connecticut.....	370,000	746,000	790,000
Massachusetts.....	995,000	2,239,000	2,590,000
Total.....	2,735,000	4,700,000	5,200,000

We have the strongest evidence of the assimilating character of American institutions in the fact that New England is typical of the American people, although half the population is composed of immigrants and their children, the census of 1890 showing :

Foreign settlers.....	1,142,000
Their children.....	1,069,000
Americans.....	2,489,000
Total.....	4,700,000

No less than 70 per cent. of foreign settlers (793,000) consisted of Canadians and Irish, two races that appear to coalesce with Americans more readily than any others. Meantime the character of the New England people has undergone a remarkable change since 1850, the increase of manufactures having been attended with a decline of agriculture, and hence urban population (that is of all towns over 10,000 population) has more than doubled since 1870 while rural has stood still, viz.:

	Urban.		Rural.	
	1870.	1890.	1870.	1890.
Maine.....	74,000	113,000	553,000	548,000
New Hampshire.....	46,000	93,000	272,000	283,000
Vermont.....	14,000	27,000	317,000	305,000
Rhode Island.....	104,000	247,000	113,000	99,000
Connecticut.....	147,000	352,000	390,000	394,000
Massachusetts.....	690,000	1,444,000	767,000	795,000
Total.....	1,075,000	2,276,000	2,412,000	2,424,000

The rapid growth of towns has coincided with a great influx of immigrants from Europe, and thus it has come to pass that the American population has declined from 66 per cent. of the total in 1870 to 53 per cent. in 1890. In other words, the census re-

turns show that in 20 years the number of Americans had increased very little, viz. :

	1870.	1890.	Increase, per cent.
Foreign settlers.....	649,000	1,142,000	76
Their children.....	496,000	1,069,000	115
Americans.....	2,342,000	2,489,000	6
Total.....	3,487,000	4,700,000	35

If we seek to ascertain the cause why the American population does not increase in New England as it does in other parts of the Union, we are almost forced to conclude that Jonathan prefers agriculture to manufactures, and that in the last 25 years some thousands of New Englanders have gone West, and given over their old farms to Canadians, whose number has increased so much that in 1890 they formed 8 per cent. of the whole population.

*Agriculture.*—This branch of industry has considerably lost ground in New England since 1850, owing to the opening up of the Western States, the cultivated area having declined, and the production of food diminished as follows :

	1850.	1893.	Diminution.
Grain, tons .....	525,000	470,000	55,000
Potatoes.....	480,000	460,000	20,000
Meat.....	108,000	81,000	27,000

So limited is now the production of breadstuffs that the total grain crop of New England would hardly suffice to feed the population of Connecticut; and as to meat the quantity produced yearly is less than what is consumed in four months. In fact, agriculture is an industry of secondary importance, the cultivated area not exceeding one-fourth of New England, and a large number of the rural population, especially in Maine, preferring to occupy themselves in felling timber. If it were not for the Western States the people of New England would find themselves, as regards food-supply, in the same position as the inhabitants of Great Britain, who mainly depend on foreign countries for grain and meat. Comparing the official returns of 1890 with those of 1850 we find that in New England the size of farms has diminished, viz. :

	No. of Farms.	Acres.	Average, acres.
1850.....	167,700	11,150,000	67
1890.....	190,100	10,740,000	56

This is apparently due to an increase of dairy-farms, for we observe that although horned cattle declined by 60,000 head, the number of milch-cows rose from 608,000 to 821,000, an increase of 35 per cent. Nevertheless, the number is still insufficient to supply the population with milk and butter, as there should be at least one milch-cow for every five inhabitants, say 1,040,000. If we sum up the value of all farm products in the six New England States, we find approximately as follows:

	Tons.	Values.
Grain .....	470,000	\$9,900,000
Potatoes.....	460,000	11,300,000
Meat and tallow.....	96,000	15,000,000
Hay.....	4,100,000	58,100,000
Dairy products.....		32,300,000
Sundries.....		25,400,000
Total.....		\$152,000,000

The gross result gives an average of \$800 to each farm, equal to \$14 per acre, the average for the whole Union being \$850 per farm and only \$11 per acre, from which it appears that the smaller the farm the greater product per acre, the average size of American farms being 78 acres, that is 40 per cent. more than in New England. Coincident with the diminution of New England farms there has been a remarkable rise in the value of land, the census of 1890 showing an increase of 150 million dollars in farming capital since 1850. The following table gives the total value of farms and live-stock in each State, as well as the average of land per acre :

	Millions dollars.		Dollars per acre.	
	1850.	1890.	1850.	1890.
Maine.....	67	122	27	33
New Hampshire.....	66	80	24	38
Vermont.....	79	102	24	30
Rhode Island.....	19	25	47	81
Connecticut.....	83	108	41	69
Massachusetts.....	122	148	51	77
Total.....	435	585	34	46

The increase of dairy farming has, therefore, greatly enhanced the value of land, to the benefit of the farmers, each farm now representing a capital value of \$3,070, against \$2,510 in 1850.

*Manufactures.*—This is by far the most important of all New England industries, and shows a rapid increase in each decennial period, the value of output having quintupled since 1850, viz. :

	—Millions dollars.—	
	Product.	Wages.
1850.....	283	77
1890.....	1,499	415

The magnitude of this industry is such that, relatively to population, no European country rivals New England in manufactures, as the following table\* shows :

	Millions dollars.	Population.	Dollars per inhabitant.
New England.....	1,499	4,700,000	319
Great Britain.....	4,022	35,100,000	115
France.....	2,860	38,500,000	74
Germany.....	3,310	52,200,000	63
Belgium.....	566	6,400,000	88

The ratio that corresponds to New England is three times that of Great Britain, four times that of France, five times that of Germany. The relative progress, moreover, has been much greater in New England than in Great Britain, viz.:

	Millions dollars.		Dollars per inhabitant.	
	1850.	1890.	1850.	1890.
New England.....	233	1,499	104	319
Great Britain.....	2,235	4,022	111	115

British manufactures have done little more than keep pace with population, while those of New England show a ratio per inhabitant three times as great as in 1850. Massachusetts stands for 60 per cent. of the total, and Connecticut comes second, but with reference to population Rhode Island shows a higher ratio of manufactures per inhabitant than either of the preceding States, viz.:

	Millions dollars.	Dollars per inhabitant.
Massachusetts.....	888	396
Connecticut.....	248	333
Rhode Island.....	143	412
Other three States.....	220	160
New England.....	1,499	319

Textiles constitute one-fourth of the total, cottons and woollens being almost equal, and other fibers insignificant. Boot-making is also carried on, to a degree that eclipses all European nations. These two industries compare with the same in Europe thus :

	Millions dollars.		Dollars per inhabitant.	
	Textiles.	Boots.	Textiles.	Boots.
New England.....	360	167	76	36
Great Britain.....	883	144	25	4
France.....	552	110	14	3
Germany.....	518	158	10	3

\* For amount of manufactures in European countries, see *Industries and Wealth of Nations*, 1896 (Longmans & Co., London and New York).

When we observe that New England turns out more boots and shoes than Great Britain, France, or Germany it is easy to understand the marvellous development of manufactures in this part of the New World. Nor is it less satisfactory to see that the wages of operatives have risen in higher ratio than the output. The number of hands employed was 313,000 in 1850, and 885,000 in 1890; the ratios of product and of wages were, therefore, as follows :

	Dollars per operative.		Increase, per cent.
	1850.	1890.	
Product.....	903	1,694	87
Wages.....	246	469	91

Wages averaged in 1890 per week exactly \$9, the average throughout the United States having been \$9.30; these rates are much higher than those in Europe, and as the cost of food is less, the New England operative is in a much better position than factory hands in Great Britain, France, or Germany.

*Railways.*—Massachusetts laid down the first railway in the New World, and in 1896 New England possessed 7,660 miles in traffic, the construction and equipment of which cost 433 million dollars. Compared with area New England has not so many miles of railway as Great Britain or France, but much more as compared with population: thus, 100,000 inhabitants have in Great Britain 52, in Germany 54, in France 56, and in New England 150 miles of railway. Nevertheless this ratio is less than for the whole Union, which has 250 miles of line for every 100,000 souls.

*Banking.*—It was ascertained in 1890 that National Banks transacted 70 per cent., other banks 30 per cent., of the total discounts. On this basis the discounts of the several States in 1894 would be as follows (as we have only returns for the National Banks in that year), and the subjoined table also shows the amount of savings banks' deposits in 1894 :

	Millions dollars.		Dollars per inhabitant.	
	Discounts.	Deposits, S. B.	Discounts.	Deposits, S. B.
Maine .....	30	53	46	81
New Hampshire ....	16	71	41	186
Vermont .....	18	23	54	84
Rhode Island .....	51	69	146	198
Connecticut .....	65	124	87	176
Massachusetts .....	374	400	166	178
New England.....	554	755	111	151

Banking is here more fully developed than in other parts of the Union, as we see in the following table (1894):

States.	Discounts, millions dollars.	Population.	Dollars per head.
New England.....	554	5,000,000	111
Middle.....	1,050	15,000,000	70
South.....	220	20,000,000	11
West*.....	1,026	29,000,000	35
Union.....	2,850	69,000,000	41

New England stands for one-fifth of the banking-power of the Union, although her population is only one-fourteenth; that that is to say, each New Englander represents in banking matters as much as three ordinary American citizens. The savings banks returns afford an eloquent proof of the industrious and thrifty habits of the people, New England counting 2,082,000 depositors, equal to 42 per cent. of the population, as compared with 22 per cent. in Great Britain. The amount of deposits compares with the same in European countries thus:

	Millions dollars.	Dollars per inhabitant.
New England.....	755	151
Great Britain.....	648	18
Prussia.....	850	27
France.....	754	19

At least two-thirds of the depositors evidently belong to the working classes, since the number of the former is equal to 63 per cent. of the adult population, male and female. Hence we may conclude that the toiling millions are much better off in New England than in Europe.

*Wealth.*—The components of wealth, according to the census of 1890, in the several States were as follows:

	Millions dollars.					Dollars per inhabitant.
	Farms.	Houses.	Railways.	Sundries.	Total.	
Maine.....	122	182	70	138	489	740
New Hampshire...	80	141	59	59	325	860
Vermont.....	102	66	49	71	266	800
Rhode Island.....	25	388	13	81	504	1,460
Connecticut.....	108	535	55	150	835	1,120
Massachusetts.....	148	2,079	114	433	2,804	1,235
New England.....	585	3,391	360	982	5,223	1,112

It appears that individual wealth is almost twice as much in Rhode Island or Massachusetts as in Maine, which is what might be expected, since urban population preponderates in the two States first mentioned, while rural forms 80 per cent. in Maine.

\* The West here comprises the 12 Prairie and 11 Pacific States.



Agricultural capital is only 11 per cent. of the total wealth of New England, and this is even a lower ratio than in Great Britain, where it stands for 15 per cent. The accumulation of wealth in New England in forty years was slower than in the Middle and Western States, the census returns showing the averages that fell to each inhabitant in 1850 and 1890 as follows :

	1850, dollars per head.	1890, dollars per head.	Annual increase, dollars per head.
New England.....	413	1,112	28.30
Middle States.....	340	1,260	38.50
South.....	314	539	14.50
West*.....	208	1,262	49.10

Meantime the accumulation in New England has been much greater than in European countries, namely \$22 in Great Britain, and \$18 in France, per inhabitant yearly, from 1850 till 1890. If we compare New England with the two richest countries in Europe we find as follows :

	Dollars per inhabitant.		
	New England.	Great Britain.	France.
Real property.....	635	523	590
Personal.....	477	1,008	620
Total.....	1,112	1,526	1,210

The amount of property in New England covered by insurance in 1890 reached 3,217 millions of dollars, equal to \$685 per inhabitant, which is a much higher ratio than in European countries.

Mortgages existing in 1890 amounted to 520 million dollars, or 17 per cent. of the value of real estate ; they were equal to 21 per cent. on farms, 15 per cent on house property. Farms were more heavily encumbered in Massachusetts than elsewhere, mortgages representing 33 per cent. of their value. The interest paid on the sum total of mortgages, urban and rural, was equal to a yearly tax of \$6.20 per inhabitant. The following table compares mortgages with total wealth in each State :

	Dollars per inhabitant.		Ratio of mortgage.
	Wealth.	Mortgage.	
Maine.....	740	49	6.8
New Hampshire.....	860	51	6.0
Vermont.....	800	85	10.6
Rhode Island.....	1,460	107	7.3
Connecticut.....	1,120	107	9.5
Massachusetts.....	1,235	144	11.6
New England.....	1,112	110	9.9

\*The West here comprises the 12 Prairie and 11 Pacific States.

According to the census of 1890 the mortgages in the whole Union amounted to 6,020 millions, equal to \$95 per inhabitant, and to  $9\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. of the total wealth of the nation ; from which it appears that New England is somewhat more heavily mortgaged than the Union at large.

*Finances.*—The aggregate of State and local taxes in 1890 was  $52\frac{1}{2}$  million dollars, that is a little over 11 dollars per inhabitant, the United States revenue in the same year being equal to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  dollars per head. Comparing the total burden of taxation with the same in European countries we find :

	Taxation, dollars, per inhabitant.		
	National.	Local.	Total.
New England.....	7.50	11.20	18.70
United Kingdom.....	12.70	5.50	18.20
France.....	15.20	5.60	20.80
Germany.....	10.60	4.50	15.10

One cause why local taxation is heavy in New England is the very liberal expenditure for education, which is rightly considered a matter of paramount importance.

*Education.*—New England has always been so renowned for intellectual preëminence that Boston is aptly termed the Athens of the New World. Apart from the academic lustre of Harvard and Yale universities, there is an atmosphere of science and letters, especially in Massachusetts, characteristic of a highly cultivated people. Whoever visits the homes of the work-people at Lowell and other cities will find on their shelves the masterpieces of English literature. New England spends 14 million dollars yearly in public instruction, say 3 dollars per inhabitant, as compared with \$1.30 in Great Britain and 80 cents in France. The result is that 94 per cent. of all persons over 10 years of age can read and write ; the ratio would be even higher but for the number of illiterate persons from Europe, as the census of 1890 shows :

	Pop. over 10 years.	Illiterates.	Do. per cent.
Americans.....	2,775,000	47,100	1.7
Foreigners.....	1,085,000	196,400	18.1
Total.....	3,860,000	243,500	6.3

Thus we see that more than 98 per cent. of Americans of New England can read and write, the average for Americans in the Union generally being 94 per cent. And here I include among

Americans the colored population, which comprises the great bulk of illiterates of native birth.

Completing the survey of New England we find that she has little to envy in other communities, and much to be proud of, as well as to thank Heaven for. It is true that she has not the boundless prairies of the West, nor Sierras teeming with precious metals, but she seems to possess in the racial character of her people and in the nature of her climate, no less than in her geographical situation, unquestionable advantages for the development of industry and the enjoyment of the blessings thereon attendant.

MICHAEL G. MULHALL.